

News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services



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DES and EPA Team up with Local Volunteers and Municipalities to Improve the Water Quality in the Souhegan River and Furnace Brook.

Concord, NH - The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services announced today that they are coordinating an EPA funded watershed-based project to study waters in New Hampshire that are listed as impaired due to elevated concentrations of bacteria. Bacteria is used as an indicator of the presence of pathogens which if ingested can cause gastrointestinal illness. The two impaired waterways that have been selected for watershed restoration planning are the Furnace Brook Watershed in New Ipswich and the Souhegan River in downtown Greenville. The study will be conducted to identify sources of potentially harmful bacteria from these waterways.

This type of study, known as a total maximum daily load or TMDL study, calculates the amount of a pollutant load a receiving water can assimilate without violating the State's water quality criteria. In the case of impaired waters, the TMDL study produces the load reduction that is needed in order for these waters to meet water quality criteria and no longer be listed as impaired. The TMDL study identifies specific pollutant loading sources and the amounts that these pollutant sources should be reduced.

A key component of this project is development of detailed watershed restoration plans for the two impaired surface waters located in New Ipswich and Greenville. The restoration plans will identify sources of bacteria and include prioritized implementation measures that can be taken to reduce or eliminate those sources. FB Environmental Consulting, headquartered in Portland, Maine, will be conducting much of the work with DES and EPA providing technical review and oversight. The ultimate outcome of the Furnace Brook and Greenville TMDL and watershed restoration projects will be to determine the sources of bacteria that have caused impairments, to develop restoration plans, and to identify projects that may qualify for federal funding assistance from EPA under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act administered by DES. Once implemented, the restoration activities will eliminate the bacteria impairments and restore the ability of these surface water segments to fully support their designated uses.

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